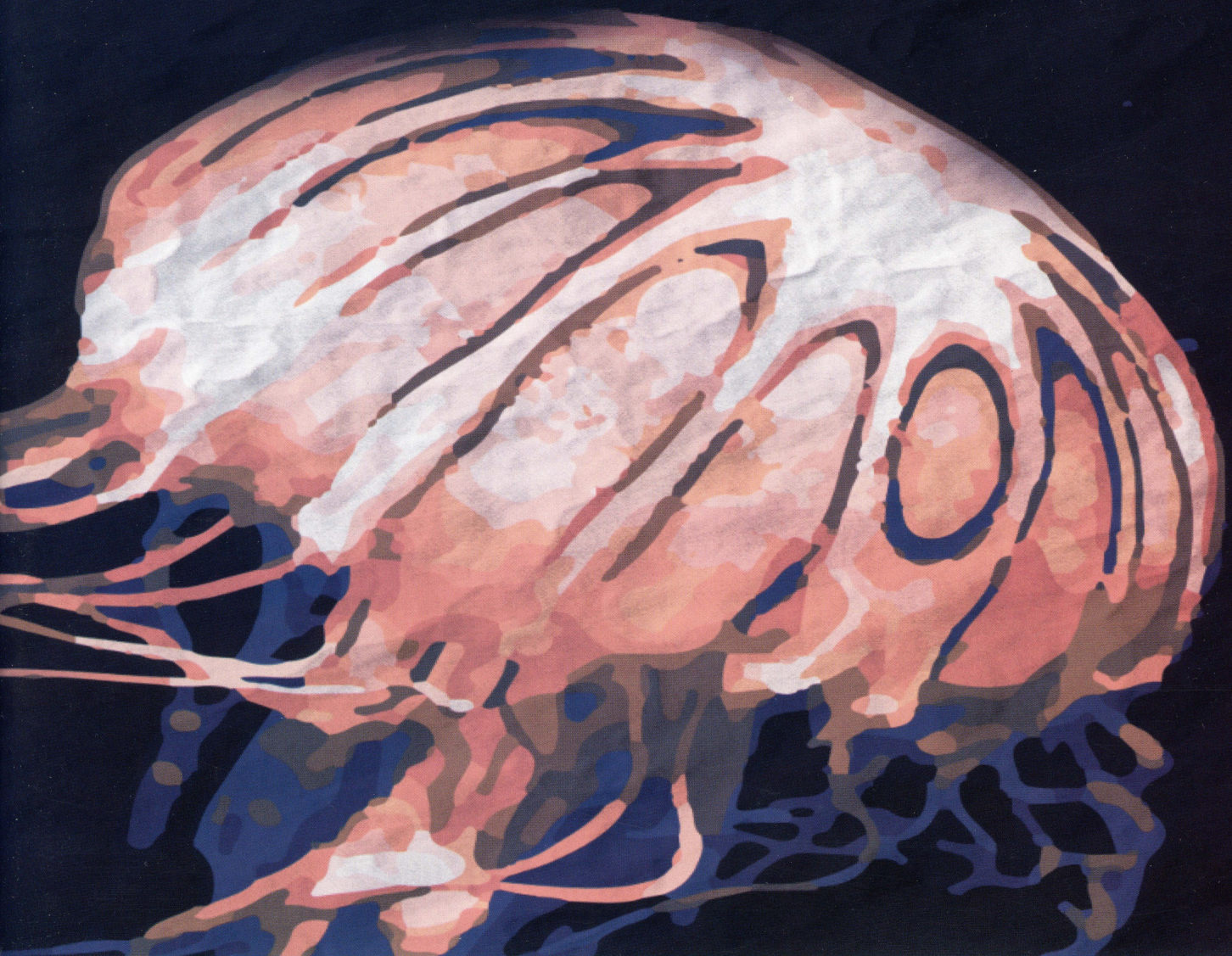
SPECTRUM2013

A Literary & Fine Arts Magazine



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A Literary & Fine Arts Magazine

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A Bright Idea
Lucas Cullen

One fateful day, you were conceived,
A wonderful creation.
A sacred promise now received,
The source of my elation.
Acting without great care,
You pay for my foolishness.
I remain wholly unaware,
You, enveloped in darkness.
Soaking in a temperate bath,
Our fortunes heading north,
You lead me on a humbler path —
As you sit, rocking back and forth.
Vibrant hues now black and white,
Forever, I shall mourn.
Your eyes will never see the light,
For you emerge, stillborn.

Freedom
Hugh Taylor

I remember in color
the sweet summer scent
pervading her flowing hair,
when the air was purple
and musky-warm in the trees.

Someone inside me
always wanted to dance
with her, to give a gentle
touch like fresh honey —
suckles sprouting from a cascade of leaves.

Everything seemed very golden
then, in dusk's gentle way.
When I met her I wasn't
much, just a husk of a
shade, but she was bright and hopeful.

It's been a time since
that light last really played
around me in a twisting,
looping whirl, but then again
Freedom is a funny sort of girl.

Emma Pfingsten

Matthew Amrhein

Good Morning
Miles Ripley

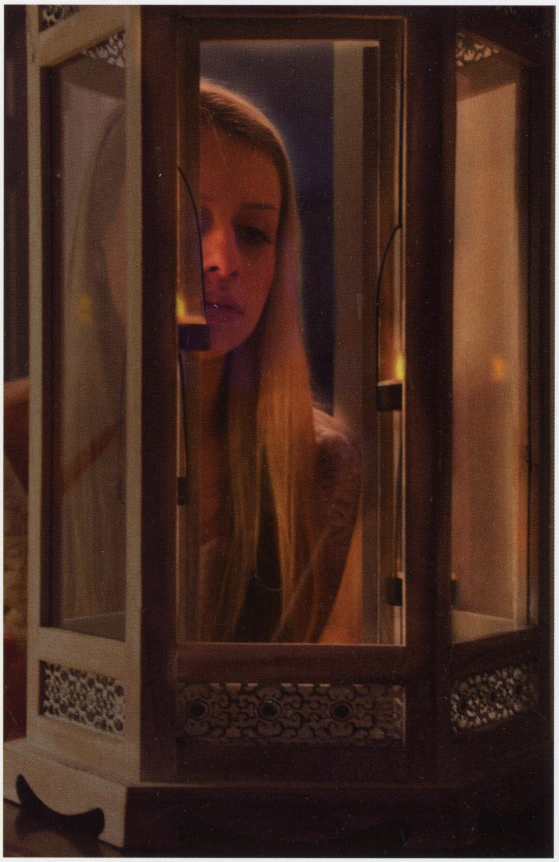
I wanted to say good morning
instead, we argue about the mess
splashes of Blue Label
suffocated the bare white carpet.

I want to explain last night,
things had gotten out of hand.
Blemishes that I made,
you buried
beneath a layer of concealer.

I have to tell you again,
how much I regret what I said.
The conformity of my words
provoked your bitter tongue.

I need you to listen.
But nostalgia sounds dull, after a while.
I shout to an empty space,
don't walk out that fucking door.

I grab your arm and squeeze it
until I can't breathe,
your knees buckle in submission.
I just wanted to say good morning.



Sam Amy

Dear _____,
Lucas Cullen

I wanted to read
Your letters again,
So I pulled them
Down from the shelf —
Along with
A dried-up
Cockroach.

Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth
Nicky Costabile

Two men sat across from each other,
Separating them was a small wooden table,
A table made of old wood, splintered and cracked at the corners,
A table with its top covered in small-carved symbols,
And printed words twirling into one another as if a puzzle piece,
A timeless puzzle that would no doubt one day fit together,
Seamlessly.

The men looked at each other with scowls and narrowed eyes,
One, the man to the north, sat with a small round object in his hand.
He rolled it around his palm, weaving it through each finger,
Over the edges of his fingertips and then back to where hand meets wrist.
It left a slight trail of slime behind.
It was a clear and odorless slime, with the occasional burst of color,
Churning in the pool of jell-o-like liquid.

Occasionally the northern man would hold the object in one hand,
And with the other itch his wrinkle-ridden face.
He wore a patch over his left eye, a strange brown-black colored patch,
The color that black sometimes became after years of use.
There were red scratch marks poking from under the patch,
As he itched one of the lines burst open and a line of dark red poured down,
Like a teardrop.

The other man, at the south side of the table, held nothing in his hands.
On the contrary, he didn't seem to move at all.
His hands stayed frozen in place on the edges of the table,
Even his eyes stayed permanently shut,
As if his tablemate did not dignify so much as a glance.
His chest did not fall, nor rise, his eyes did not flutter at the sun,
And his legs did not twitch under the odd position of the short chair he sat in.

In fact, the only part of him that did move were his colorless lips,
Thick and pale, they moved from side to side, pressing into one another,
As if he were moving something around in his mouth, with his tongue.
Every now and again, his lips would part slightly,
And one could see a small shining white speck in his mouth,

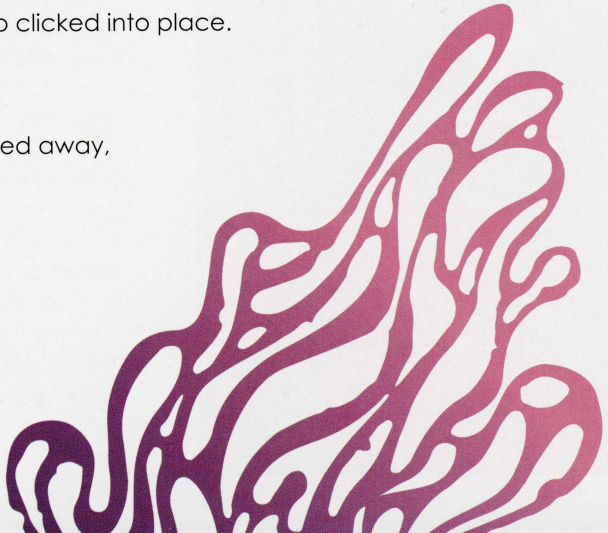
Rolling over his tongue,
Bouncing off his yellow teeth and sliding across his lower lip.
The two men looked at each other.
One with a small object in his hands, the other with a small object in his mouth.
At precisely noon, as the sun convened just above their small table,
Each man stopped his movement.

Slowly the man to the north spread his hands out and revealed a small white sphere,
It rolled onto the table with its patriotic veins and distinct blue-green pupil.
The south man brought his hand to his mouth and spit out that gleaming speck.
Amidst of the yellow green spit was a rectangular tooth, which he slid to the table.

With one quick reflex each, each man snatched the other's object from the table,
And held it against his own chest, cradle it, cooing to it.
The man to the south slowly opened his eyes, revealing one blue-green pupil,
And one gaping black hole.
He turned to the side, for privacy, for security against the watching eye.
With a slow and deliberate movement he brought the eyeball up to his eyehole,
Squeezing it with two fingers, he finagled it into the socket with each

The northern man took this action as his cue,
And he brought the gleaming white tooth up to his abnormally dry mouth.
With his jaw set with extraordinarily and unordinary white teeth,
The man wheedled the small chip into place,
A space the size of a finger tips residing on the top row,
Just below the center of his lip,
And after about three and a half tries, the chip clicked into place.

And with that, the men shook hands,
And then quickly, and not so discreetly,
Wiped their hands on their pantsuits, and walked away,
One to the south and one to the north.



Caitlyn Szilvassy

A Woman's Worth
Rachel E. Lewis

Paint-dipped fingers sticky
Against thick, sap-ridden lips
Pasted below charcoal eyelashes that dust
The glass between the folds of
Aphrodite and Cornelia

The futile verbiage seeking only to
Break the leather stiletto's heel
Lose the red, homeward destined soles and
The giving of the crystal slippers in exchange for liberty

To obtain only what is mediocre with
The tumbling of the crown from mustard and bleached scalps
Desiring what is only naked and true
To walk along – not yellow bricks or royal marble slabs
But God-given dirt
With vanilla skin and bare palms

Wispy Vapor
Amanda Hieatzman

Burning leaves on a frosted fall afternoon with
Sticks and twigs mixed together like a recipe from Mother Nature.
It can make hot dogs sizzle like bacon on brown sticks over wispy vapor.
The vapor curls slowly, a dying grey snake burned alive.
It coughs and waves like the spirit of a fire dragon.
The wisps curl like a cat's tail in a cradle,
Unpredictable, unknown, yet silent as star twinkling bright.
It smells of vegetated death,
Scaring some creatures while soothing others.
Unable to feel its frail form with fragile fingers for
At the slightest touch the wisps become whirlpools and spiral away.
Disappearing mysteriously like a field mouse being chased by a cat.
But it lashes at the eyes like thorns on a rose bush,
Blinding the beholder entranced with its artist spins.
It is the bringer of death yet the leader in new life.
Marking the earth in an impermanent scent scar.

Derrick Cullen

Silver Colored Crayon
Nicky Costabile

In a town of look-alike homes with white fair fences and green grasses,
There is a house that, though it may seem to look like its brothers,
Is remarkable in a way few know or will ever know.
In a house of look-alike rooms with white walls and cream carpets,
There is a window, which leads to a roof. In laid with bricks and tiling,
Are small papers, plastered with tape, stories in scarlet marker, and
Secrets in silver colored crayon.

Alex Pak

Benighted Vigor
Rachel E. Lewis

Hard men have followed the night lights
Into the whispering grey
And the cold call in the darkened fog
Have led many astray
But the orchid rise will find demise
In all but good faith
And the weak man will find his hand
Christened in the night's embrace

Lofty Request
Justin Poe

My beloved brother came to me
Bearing on his mind a small request
To lend him the funds to make a death
To save his life from the seed of regret
And abandon me with bloody hands

Gesta, non verba

Maria Carrera

I bear a poem on my uterus
With my fears in its cells
And my rebellion on its genes.
Every morning I feed it with folic acid
And rustic words.
Some nights its fragile legs move,
While its lines try to find the smoothest structure.
This for nine months
Until one day it will come out from between my legs
With a political face and its sex as a revolution.

Sarah Wockenfuss

Fara Topolsky

Illustration on pages 10 –11 by Nhu Nguyen

ART
IS NOT A
THING;
it is a way.
-Elbert Hubbard

Fat Man and Little Boy
Spence Lack

A letter, simple stamp
from Einstein to Roosevelt.
Potent possibility endorse
of elemental fury melt.
Volatile mineral, relative genius
two-three-five forced into itself.
He'll live with that script and
die with it.
Oppenheimer made chief
of wasteland desert named Los Alamos.
Charged to seed the belly of a steel bird her
pretty name, Enola Gay, to be made pregnant with
a Little Boy or a Fat
Man.
Leaflets fell first to assuage their
guilt, warnings impossible to heed.
Paper fallout unto eleven cities
of which Hiroshima and Nagasaki were only two.
Fungus shaped clouds bore poison spore, their
prism rainbow hues given color
by the atomized debris; detritus of late
trees, buildings, lives.

The Knight and the Dragon: A Limerick in Middle English
Alex Taciak

Ther oones was a younge gentil knyght,
Who fighten fiers dragouns with myght.
But fortune is crewel;
It brenned him wel.
He becomen a gode dener for the wyght.

Katie Fersch

Seeking Perfection
April Marie Wolf

Wondering or running away?
I hear my name in the distance—
each repeat sounding more and more extracted by the wind.
Dead end and to no real destination;
a mirage to the mind and an illusion to the heart.
No explorer ever made a discovery without mistake first.

Don't stop moving.
Dunes so wide and tall, an overwhelming feeling brings bile to rise in my stomach.
Like a searching man for lost treasure in the desert of an Arabian night.
What genie would grant me three wishes?
Sightless.
Such a disgrace to myself that even my eyes have abandoned me.

Too much seawater.
A new day brings out my weakness and predators feed on the scent of burning flesh.
Like a seal diving so deep in an attempt to escape the jaws of a great white.
At what depth could I find sanctuary?
Imperfect.
Fear fights for survival, even when it means seeking the unfathomable.

That voice calling me home again?
Only an echo now.
I can't—won't respond anymore.
I close my eyes and listen to the peaceful serenity of nothingness.
If I wanted to be found, where am I anyway?
Out on open water or just in the midst of a sandstorm?

Nickel
Alexis Eichelberger

The clump of metal.
A face sculpted ever so perfectly,
Making the smooth surface potholed, uneven.
Words that are overlooked,
Because the meanings are taken for granted.
Round, dirty nickel.
Passed through generations (upon generations),
Slips through the fingers of all,
No matter your race, age, gender.
Annoying clinking sound when grouped,
Like the man on there is yelling out.
Ghastly odor, that lingers on those same fingers it passed through.

You And I
Ben Block

Let us go then, you and I

Who is this person he refers to?
At first glance, he seems to direct
"you"
To someone he cared about. Perhaps, a
Hopeful improvement of
Their relationship

Let us go then, you and I

As one progresses into the poem,
It is understood that he is running
The scenario in his mind.
The "you" he refers to is simply
himself,

Let us go then, you and I

He tries to bring himself
To do this Bold Thing, but
He is held back through fear,
That he might convey his insecurities.

Let us go then, you and I

His great fear lies not in that he might
Convey his insecurities, but
That he already has.

Indeed, for rather than letting her
know how he felt,

He hid

Kept his emotions inside
Clinically rationalized.
The Patient on the Table

Let us go then, you and I

With the distance he had set, she
Never knew. Thus, in
Her eyes, he
Was never considered.

Let us go then, you and I

Part our ways, for I
Prefer Dali.

I
Am
Still
Learning.

Iris Valle

Windy Serenity
Megan Grieshaber

The hot sun upon my face
The wind tousles my hair
The salty spray stings my eyes
And covers my bronze summer skin.

Rays of sun lick my skin
While the glare dances in my eyes
The radiant warmth warms my core
and melts away the worries of my life

The warm breeze kisses my cheek
It whispered a sweet "Hello"
A sudden gust fills the sails
Where it sends me, I can't be sure.

My legs dangle in the cold bay
The sailboat continues to heel over
Cold waves approach too fast
and soak me from head to toe.

Sailing on my Grandfather's yacht
Here In the middle of the Chesapeake
Not a boat in sight nor cloud in the sky
I feel like the wind that blows past my sails.

The hot sun upon my face
The wind tousles my hair
The salty spray stings my eyes
and covers my bronze summer skin.

Alyssa Russell

Chris Jaeger

The Christmas Camera
Sara Secada-Lovio

A sea of wrapping paper covered the ground
Around the base of a decorated tree.
Four nearly identical children with brown hair
Wearing their pajamas quickly
Tore through the efforts of my mother,
Who stayed up to make sure today,
As always, would be a special day.
My oldest sister opened a video camera
And my father put on his glasses
That magnified his eyes and made them
Into large dark buttons
To turn it on for her.
His brow furrowed and
Without words the familiar cloud of his anger
That was ingrained in my memory came around,
Entered the room, and
Erased the calm that was there
Just a moment before.
And the four us hid with in another room
He spat angry words
Looking on with anxious eyes
Waiting to see what would happen next.
I know this anger all too well
And how it can taint
A moment or a day.
But the worst is when it ruins a man
And steals everything from him
And strips him down to just a bad memory.

Ruthie Edwards

Kaelin Clements

Sherie Jones

Forever a Daddy's Girl
Katie Cuizon

Freshly baked pastries
alongside freshly brewed caffeinated aromatics
Mixtures of vanilla, cinnamon, hazelnut
with a touch of caramel

The barista — tall and slim
long smooth brown hair
perfect olive colored skin
Her welcoming friendly smile
complimented her forest green eyes
Her brown apron was tied up
Behind her back
and pressed against her torso.

My Turtle Mocha
Three full pumps of caramel syrup
two perfectly creméd shots of espresso poured on top
and skim milk steamed with white chocolate to fill the cup
topped with whipped cream, caramel drizzle,
and snicker bits to top it off
A sip of heaven every time.

Propping myself up on a stool
Sitting at a high top table
Across from the only man who will
ever love me unconditionally
My aromatherapy
Forever a daddy's girl

Courtney Roberts

Illustration on pages 20–21 by Stephanie Lawson

Concrete
Justin Poe

I Forgiveness

Once I heard that forgiveness is human. I wanted to be human, so I forgave. I forgave all of those around me, which were many, so many that I forgot all of their many names. I no longer knew their faces, nor did I recognize the memories I once shared with them. Forgiving them, I forgot them.

They are nothing to me now.

Now I am human. And I have lost myself in my forgiveness—I cannot forgive myself for forgiving.

II Prayer

Days blend on the canvas of my bed, where day and night fold after hours, within hours of my waking and sleeping.
I wake to prayer. I sleep to prayer.
I move, learn, live to prayer.
Prayer is the rhythm by which I step. My footpath has been uncovered.

My eyes bled in a single month—of waking and sleeping. The silver line of dawn I wait for every morning. And every evening I wait for the twilight of the stars.
Waking and sleeping are not acceptable in the minds of many.
But, I forgive them.

III Value

A tree deep within the forest beside the mind of my house sheds leaves of silver-gold every fall coming Winter. The loan burdened to my body is shook off by the heavy leaves. When the seasons change, the earth under the tree feeds on the leaves' density.
How else would the forest continue living?
I collect these leaves, since birth to the cycle of now. And before sleeping, I place a single gold-silver leaf over each eye and doze into the forest to become the rigid emerald tree till morning. Gold-silver leaves become green, red, orange, and purple after a night within the house.
I have learned never to assume the value of something outside of me.

IV Existence

"How does the leper feel?" a sober friend asked.
"The leper does not feel," I shook my head in reply. "The leper no longer feels the pain, the heat and cold, the life and death, of existence. He only feels his worth. The leper becomes no one and nothing. The leper loses a part of his Self, each time he loses an organ. Although, the leper does not wish for death, nor does he wish for the fulsome material he once had."
"What is his wish?"
"To be for as long as he may."

V Opposites

Run opposite. Run opposite to me and all that I know, that I have thought. Meet at a point we have mutually defined, we two rays running perpendicular—not adjacent or parallel for that is not opposite. Rightly we are formed.
We are North and East.
We are South and West.
We are the expected and the phenomenal.
We are opposites of opposites, framing us the same.

As opposites, we are opposites of some other opposite, for everything opposite is an opposite of some other opposite—we are related; we are the same. Two opposites constitute a single unit that identifies us. See that we are the same. Running closer, opposites attract, we become physically and metaphysically similar,—we superimpose. We are gray.
Once whole, we parted for kismet to become two extremes—we are not existence or lack thereof; we are life and death, not immortality.

Context. Opposites in context.

Tré Seals

Atmospheric Chorus
Haley Nethen

Silence.
An eerie stillness; omniscient
Then a flash. Everything becomes illuminated,
a hot white foreground flanks the limbs of every tree
blinding, bright as day.

But it only gives a glimpse,
the flick of a light switch, then back to black.
A tease.

The candesence brings with it a warning; a ticking clock
I know it's coming.
Low rumbles build into a symphony of sound
soft-billowed cymbals crash into one another.

The chorus in the atmosphere may frighten some
but I bask in its performance,
and await the next verse.

VII.

layna Moore

I hope you give her butterflies.
And that she doesn't keep them hidden away in the cage of her stomach,
Barred behind Adam's ribs,
avoiding public profession.
I hope they race towards her throat,
wings spread wide,
ready to take flight from her lips.
I hope you find deliverance there,
in the creases of her smile.
A smile she has reserved her whole life for you.
I hope she tells you everyday,
out loud,
for all the world to hear,
that she loves you,
in the most extraordinary way.
And that you can hear the conviction in her voice.
I hope you long for her.
And it teaches you something about endurance.
I hope you're skilled at carpentry
and you can rebuild what others have torn asunder
in all the time it took for the two of you to find each other.
I hope she wakes up to the
secrets in your voice,
ones only she can decipher.
And that you fall asleep beside her,
to the echo of her heart,
pounding with promise,
assurance that she is yours.
I hope she finds forever in you,
that she'll see tomorrow in your eyes
and her soul will dance in anticipation of every coming day.
I hope you love her when it rains.
And that she adorns you with sunshine,
despite the passing clouds.
I hope she loves you most when no one's looking,
without performance,
in genuine privacy,
in low, close whispers.
I hope you taste honest to her,
that she will no longer be starved for trust.
And I hope she smells like the end,
sweet and everlasting.
And you search no further than the fragrance of her skin.

Emma Pfingsten

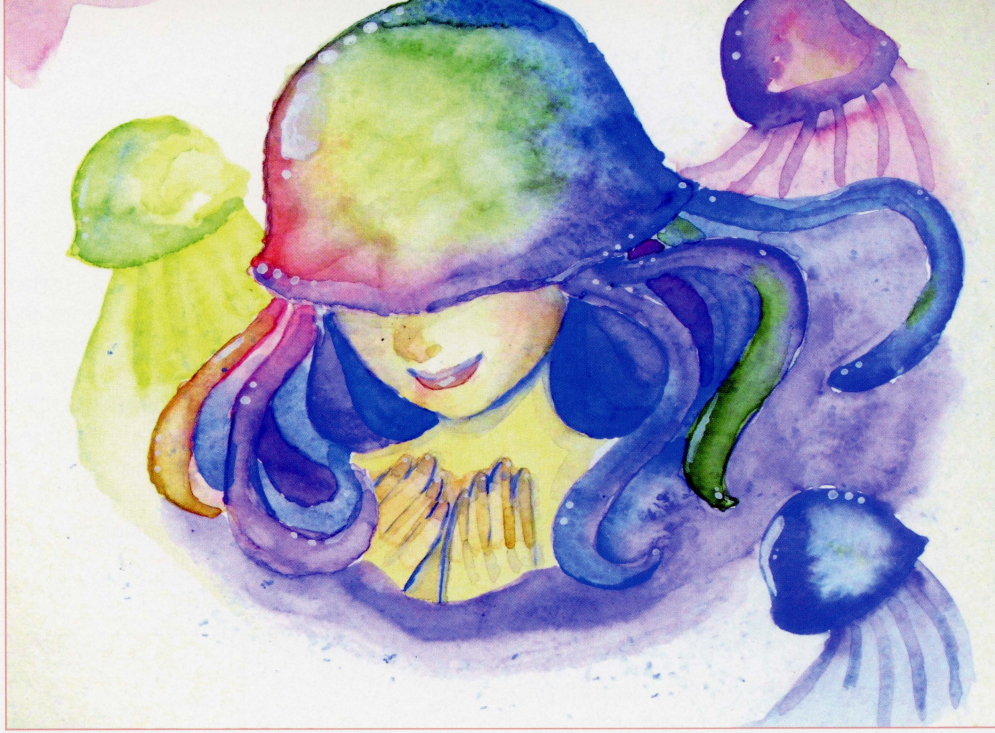
Nicole Costabile

Periodical
Tré Seals

Why do I do what I do
when I don't know who I am?
All these people by my side,
but they just don't understand,
exactly what I'm goin(g) through.
I'm tryna cleanse my soul,
like we used to cleanse our hands with glue.
Connect the dots
like LEGO blocks,
collectin(g) rocks...
Why?
(be)cause I like the things that shine
like my light.
Yeeaaah
and I thought it was kinda tight.
Though I never found gold.
I kept searchin(g)
but it got old.
Then later I found it,
wrapped my hands
around it,
and looked at the reflection of me,
and realized either me or my vision
kinda looks like pee,
so I took the silver that I had
and found all purity,
in it.
Then it tarnished unlike me.
I stay stainless.
Don't believe me?
Ask my demons
they're like, 'you stainless still?'

Yeah,
I guess I'm just somethin(g) like stainless steel.
As them demons tried to make me
lighter in the cranium,
I outsmarted them
Unlike overrated titanium
(be)cause I treat my mind
like it's fine
China.
Plate-inum.

Kevin Carter



Katlyn Harmon

Loch Raven
Mary Jane Kiehne

In the old Loch lies a town
Buried beneath the water
And bubbling up the mystery
Of what it once was.

On the shores people feed geese
And show their children not
To be afraid. "The geese wont hurt you"
They say — "If you don't get too close."

Across the way drunken teenagers
Run and jump into the water.
They don't know that the currents
Have taken many lives.

Fishermen cast their lines into the water
Trying to avoid the hands of those who lay beneath
Grabbing and grasping the dangling worms
Getting caught on the old cross above the church.

In the old Loch lies a town
Buried beneath the water
And bubbling up the mystery
Of what it once was.

Antler
Mary Jane Kiehne

The antler is like a time capsule
Into the life of a deer.
What was once a little nub
Has now grown into a tremendous thorn.

The antler is like a begging question,
Asking, what have you done
To deserve this poignant
Stab in your gut?

The antler is like a twisting coil,
Wrapping and turning
Through your veins
Trying to get your blood pumping faster.

The antler, lays alone in the woods
It lacks an owner,
Who was once a majestic beast
Romping through the forest.

The antler, is a constant reminder,
That sense of blood gushing,
The forlorn feeling of not knowing the answer,
Of what happened to this deer.

Janae Matthews

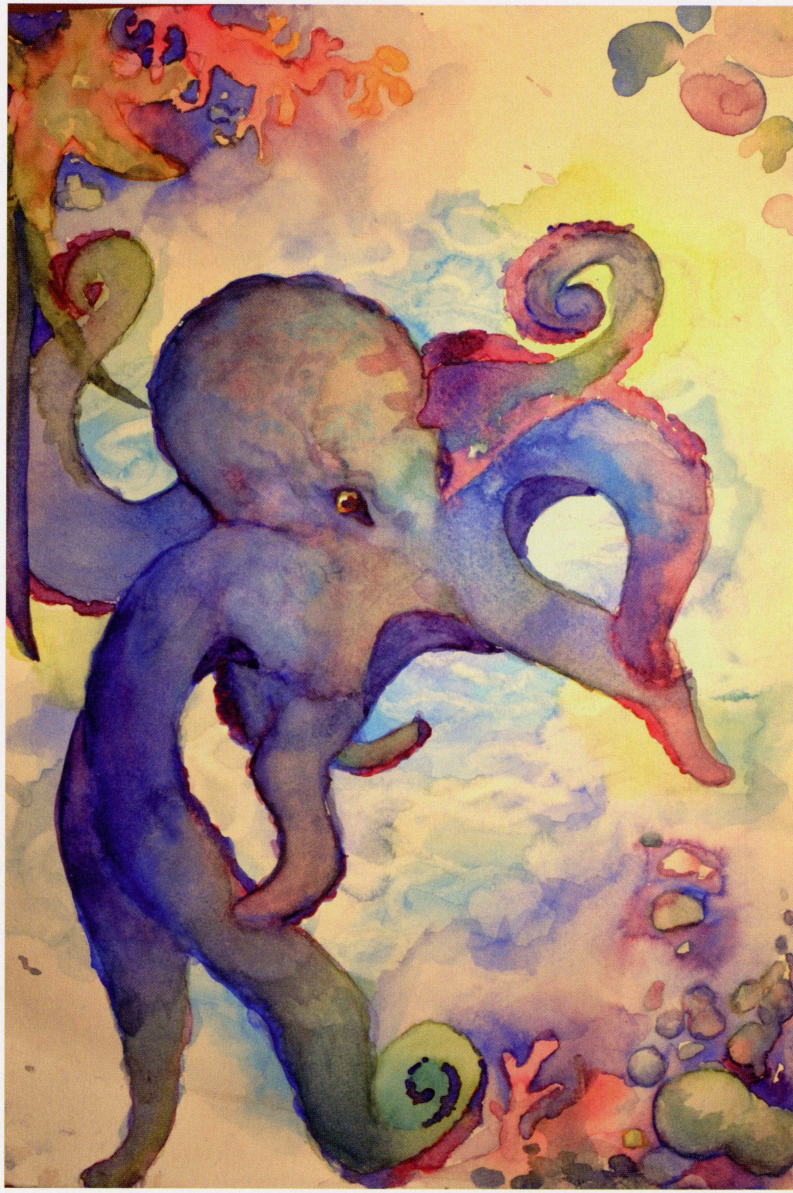
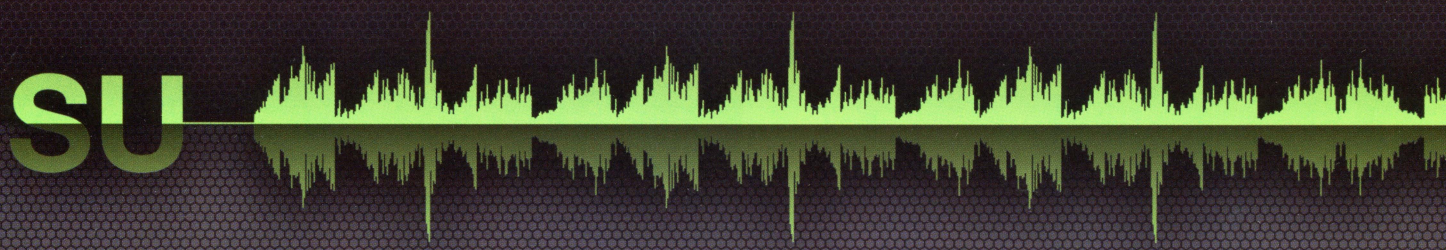


Illustration on pages 30–31 by Nick Patterson


SU

Leah Arizala

S'mores
Janay Jackson

I'm roasting marshmallows
over the fire. It's kind of low
I add your favorite jersey
then your precious
basketball card collection.

That's much better.
My graham crackers and Hershey
chocolate envelopes the
marshmallows. The warm and
simple flavors begin to comfort

Sucking excess chocolate off
my fingers, I add the dewy-eyed
photos of us to the fire. Laughter,
dismay, animosity, sorrow, birthdays,
anniversaries, Christmases, no more

Envious emotions stir. I was never
good enough: no backbone. Well
we'll just have to change that. The
house incinerates behind me, sirens
rudely interrupt my thoughts.

Harshly shoving two marshmallows
on the stick, I roast them over
the fire.

Sheetz Parking Lot
Megan Dexter

After the divorce every other weekend was my father's weekend,
My mom would meet my father at a Sheetz that had a sloped parking lot.
He would be writing a child support check on the hood of his ghost grey suburban,
Us three kids transferred our duffle bags over from my Mom's car and said good bye.

My two brothers and I were sitting in the kitchen of his old farmhouse apartment.
The wooden floor of the kitchen felt like the arctic waters even through my fuzzy pink socks.
The pale blue cabinets with chipped cow heads painted on them were barely on to their hinges
And I never understood why the cows were wearing red bandanas.

The outdated refrigerator stood alone and next to it was shelving
That looked like it belonged in the back of an old library workroom.
The window above the sink was poorly painted in brown trim,
Half of which appeared to have ended up on the window itself.

Sunday was his laundry day and of course he did not have a laundry machine.
The laundry mat on main street that resided in a building older than my great grandparents,
Was where we used rolling laundry carts, quarters and rusted chairs to entertain ourselves
Dad would by us fifty cent ginger ale from a faded machine, this meant he was almost done.

Kelsey Ann Paszkiewicz

Megan Kaplon

Elwin
Spence Lack

Young enough for drafting
too old for warring, and not
suited, still
they clothed him drab,
uniform: they
girded his belt with a mahogany club
destined to be bloodless they thought
to turn him, to make him, a cop, a military police-man.

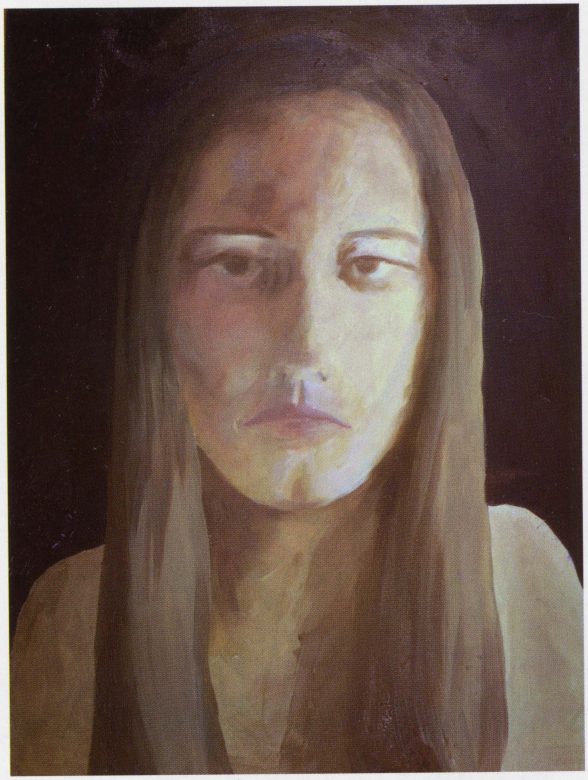
Thus, assigned, to ferry prisoners domestic
and delinquent, soldiers reluctant
once made to pay
a nickel toll to cross a bridge his
chagrin wrote a five cent check

and saved it certified, to prove
his point. He'd break
regulation, un-cuff his
charges so they could eat hamburgers together that
cost more than nickels.

When dementia lowered his guard as
a grandfather in his sleepy chair
he'd curse, gentleness eroded by ire aroused
ads soliciting service from young men
goddamn fucking army he'd growl, awaking
from his baseball lulled slumbers.

Three Lanes Intersect
Walter Vargas

A stop sign was the midpoint between their homes.
And for a week now, he, full of hope,
escorted her there after school.
He was sure to get a kiss this time,
he had earned it, he thought.
As they stopped, he nervously rested his
back against the silvery pole, and although
at seventeen he had previous experience
he was still on full alert of every noise,
of every motion, of every expression,
and noticed;
This was the perfect setting for their first kiss:
A cloudless spring day, with the sun shining bright enlightened
one endless road, with no homes insight, intersected by
another that was just alike. And on the side of that T-intersection
a pair of timeless swings sat, awkwardly,
next to an empty unfriendly basketball court on one side
and a green, lonesome, field of tall grasses that,
swayed back and forth in the wind, on the other.
In his mind, they were the only ones Left.
Searching for words to say, he slowly lost his confidence.
The wind was the only one doing the talking as it swayed the chains
of the swings back and forth harmoniously.
Five minutes had turned into an
eternity, and at last he looked her in the eyes
and lost sight of everything around him.
As though the wind had suddenly stopped,
he heard no more of the chains.



Kathleen Kotoski

Nicole Myrick

Rosarium
Maria Carrera

Joyful mystery
Beads of sin
Marbles of pleasure
Addictive clay that I obey
Prescribed to replace penance
Ruega por nosotros
Luminous mystery
Glorious body of Satan
Hard or easily melted
Never my last supper
70% only, Eucharist standards
Ruega por nosotros
Sorrowful mystery
Alkaloid devotion
Thorns for my face
Cross carried by my hips
Until I am crucified by my weakness
En vos confio
Glorious mystery
Unsweetened, with rose petals, lavender or chili
From tropical forests of Africa or South America
My daily reason for resurrection.
Así sea.

Helen

Marc Kohlman

Daughter of the great Zeus
with ambitious spirit to let loose
Prize of a great king
only chaos did she bring
Upon one fateful day
Prince Paris took her breath away
To Troy did they sail
With a love the Gods do not hail
Love met at the point of a spear
Women all shed a tear
In this ten year war
She is the one men fought for
In battle Prince Paris fell
Helen's cries resound like a bell
So did Troy fall
A tale told for all
Unable to relieve or forget
Helen's destiny was set
Returning to Greece across the sea
It seemed like an eternity
Sealing King Menelaus within his tomb
With her baby girl close to her womb
She who had been a queen
Her beauty like none ever seen
Lived out her days behind palace walls
Crying as she hears the ghosts calls
Wounded heart and broken pride
Helen chose suicide
Coming to her own end
To the kingdom of Olympus she did ascend
Blessing and a curse
On the hearts of men

Nicole Myrick

Cannibal Bag
Rachel Wingender

Square and plastic, from a Scottish gift shop.
Its teeth devour your fleshy fingers.
While its stomach contains your gifts.
A man's off white tunic from the 16th century,
Stained with blood for all eternity.
You cannot see the famous man's face,
Only the menacing jaws with bits of flesh.
Yes this bag, this gory, gory bag,
That may disgust and frighten you,
Was a Christmas present from my loving mother,
Brought over from the great land of Scotland special.
It sits in a frame as black as the heart of that famous man,
On the wall beside my bed.
It's the first thing I see when I wake,
And the last at night.
A thing of nightmares,
A sign of a mother's love

The Incessent Race
Kelsey Green

Towards the end we point our swords,
Will men ever learn the ways not north?
With feathered hearts and greedy eyes,
They only fight their way to survive.
Eyes faced forward and chins held high,
A glance ceases to travel behind.
As the journey prevails and the blade hits stone,
All men finally turn to moan.
They witness the damage once undone,
And leave an apology for their sons.
Though prospering anew continues to do,
Noticing past steps allows you to be,
For you've experienced it once and studied it another.
Learning can travel from one to a brother.
Maybe now the race will halt,
And we can give reason to our horrendous fault.

Michelle Canvisser

Terral Thompson

Richmond
Miles Ripley

Richmond's tallest building
lent us its view of the rustic skyline.
July's warm morning sun peered over the edge
as we made our first drop.

The simplicity of the job
was what made it work.
Tattered, black nylon straps hugged my thighs,
the loyalty of my knot

kept me stable.

Eager and deceiving winds,
stole foam from the white pail
dangling from my harness
and gave it back to the city.

The breeze of the morning
eventually was gone,
along with some water
the wind had taken.

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